



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Department of State, A/GIS/PS/SRP
The American Embassy

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 02-12-2008 BY 60324 uc baw/sep/hjs

Change to _____
Release () Excise () Deny () Declassify
Exemptions D () () E.O. 13526 25x () ()
With concurrence of _____ not obt.
_____ contained _____ Date 3-10-2013

Mr. Tolson ✓
Mr. Belmont ✓
Mr. Mohr ✓
Mr. Casper ✓
Mr. Callahan ✓
Mr. Conrad ✓
Mr. DeLoach ✓
Mr. Evans ✓
Mr. Gale ✓
Mr. Rosen ✓
Mr. Sullivan ✓
Mr. Tavel ✓
Mr. Trotter ✓
Tele. Room ✓
Miss Holmes ✓
Miss Gandy ✓

Date:

January 8, 1963

To:

Director, FBI

From:

Legat, Rome (66-61)

Subject:

His Holiness Pope JOHN XXIII
INFORMATION CONCERNING

There have been a number of articles published in the press throughout the world concerning the recent illness of the Pope. These articles have described the Pope's illness as being anything from a flu attack to cancer. Most articles state the Pope is not suffering from a serious illness and that he is recovering to the extent that he is able to again receive visitors, hold audiences, and conduct his regular business.

The true illness of the Pope is undoubtedly being held in secrecy by the Vatican. There is no doubt that a serious illness would have serious repercussions throughout the world. Therefore, most recent accounts relate that Pope JOHN is recovering from his ailments and that he is in good health for a man of his age.

There are some reports emanating from sources close to the Vatican that the Pope is seriously ill, but putting up a good front before the people of the world. These reports indicate Pope JOHN is most anxious to carry out the work of the Ecumenical Conference started in 1962 and to this end would even sacrifice his personal health. He is also reportedly most sincerely interested in finding peace in the world. He undoubtedly recognizes the serious

3 - Bureau (1 - Foreign Liaison Section)
1 - Rome 66-61

7/MG:oc

F-78

56 JAN 25 1963

EX-120

REC-19

5-988
62-105058-3

JAN 21 1963

b6
b7C per FBI

EXP. PROC.
JAN 11 1963

danger in communism and is devoting a great deal of his personal efforts in preparing his faithful to combat this evil philosophy.

Legat, Rome, has met Pope JOHN on two occasions. During discussion the Pope spoke most highly of the United States and the American people. He indicated that the United States, as leader of the Western world, has a most important mission in its fight against communism.

There are some reports, ostensibly originally from sources close to the Pope, indicating he is actually suffering from cancer. On January 2, 1963, Miss MATILDA SINCLAIRE, Social Secretary to the U. S. Ambassador in Rome, confidentially advised Legat that on the previous day she was told in confidence by the Italian Ambassador to the Holy See, BARTOLOMEO MIGONE, that the Pope was suffering from cancer and that he cannot be expected to live very much longer. According to this source, the Pope is suffering pain from the disease, but wishes to carry out his important work and responsibility to his people without causing alarm. He reportedly does not want the people to know the truth of his ailment for fear it may cause concern.

On January 4, 1963, Legat engaged in a social discussion with Dr. GIUSEPPE CARLOTTI, Director of the well known Vatican Museum. Dr. CARLOTTI has been Director of the Vatican Museum during the past 32 years and has frequent personal contact with the Pope. Dr. CARLOTTI is a neighbor of Legat, both residing in the same apartment building. Dr. CARLOTTI during the discussion confidentially advised Legat that members of the Vatican staff are deeply concerned with the health of the Pope. Those who have frequent contact with the Pope notice his courage in carrying out his many responsibilities, but also note he appears to be suffering from his current illness. Although there has been no official announcement to the effect that the Pope has cancer, and although the subject of the Pope's illness is not openly discussed among Vatican officials, it is strongly suspected the Pope is suffering from cancer. Dr. CARLOTTI further stated members of the Vatican family believe the cancer is located in the area of the stomach and only a miracle can save the Pope's life.

In regard to the above, it is interesting to note that the Pope is once again carrying on a nearly full schedule. In closing the first session of the Ecumenical Conference in December, 1962, he reportedly told the many bishops and cardinals in attendance that when the Conference is reconvened in 1963 they may have a new Pope.

Above furnished for the information of Bureau. Any additional information received concerning this and related matters will be promptly forwarded to the Bureau.